

prescribed by the constitution. On the first suggestion of the plan then under consideration, he thought it might have answered the purpose; but from the reasonings of gentlemen in opposition to it, and whose opinions alone would deservedly have vast weight in the national counsels, as well as from the sentiments of persons abroad, he was now persuaded the proposition would not be received, however doubtful it might appear, considered merely as an abstract and speculative question. The thing must now be abandoned, as fallacious, for if persisted in, it would certainly prove in the event, only a dreadful deception to those who were serious for joining the union. He then placed in a striking and affecting light, the situation of that state in case they should not be received by Congress, convulsions in the northern part, factions and discord in the rest. The strength of his own party who were seriously anxious for amending the government would be dissipated, their union lost, their object probably defeated, and they would, to use the simple figurative language of scripture, be dispersed like sheep on a mountain. He therefore concluded it was no more than a proper discharge of his public duty as well as the most adviseable way of obtaining the great end of his opposition to vote against any proposition which would not be received as a ratification of the constitution."

I cite with the greater pleasure these two respectable instances, not only as a striking proof of the justice of those sentiments which induced two such men to abandon a cause they were warmly attached to, but that in the midst of the party violence to which we have been unhappily witnesses, we may dwell a few moments with delight on the magnanimous virtue which produced such distinguished instances of candour.

If these considerations have no effect, but it is still asked, Shall we consent to a system destructive to our liberties, without taking proper precautions to secure them? Let us calmly ask ourselves, Can we believe not only that the members of the General Convention at Philadelphia, but that eleven State Conventions meeting separately since, could either be so ignorant of the proper principles of liberty, or so indifferent about them, as to consent to any system by which it could be in reality endangered? Is the vital spark of freedom, which so lately set all America in a flame, existing no where but in the breasts of the majorities of North-Carolina and Rhode-Island, and of the minorities of the other states? Surely it is much more probable that those who have taken so much pains to inflame you, condescending to use very little reason with a great deal of passion, are mistaken in entertaining such high ideas of their own superior wisdom, than that North-Carolina and Rhode-Island now remain the only American bulwarks of liberty. I trust in God the other states are not in so desperate a condition, and hope I shall not offend you in supposing that